

29 Sylvia Rd
Medford, Mass
Mar 18, 1976

Hall of Fame for Great Americans,
2 Washington Square Village
New York N.Y.

MAR 23 1976

Dear Sirs—

I am writing you to urge the endorsement and election to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans of Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, initiator of the first public school system in New Jersey, and the recipient of 25 decorations and numerous citations for her heroic work on European battlefields.

Clara Barton was born in North Oxford, Mass. on Christmas Day in 1821 and died April 12, 1912 at the age of 91. She received her education for teaching school at the Clinton Liberal Institute at Clinton N.Y. — all the education which the schools of that day allowed to a woman. Her first position was at Bordentown N.J. in a school of 6 pupils which number increased to 600 in three years. Thus the public school system which had

endured much prejudice and dissent was made permanent.

Clara Barton was the first woman clerk in the Washington D.C. Patent Office and a woman whose career as a Civil War Nurse and internationally active humanitarian began when she was 40 years old. At the beginning of the War, she worked in Washington for the relief of the wounded brought. Finally, she was granted permission to go to the front and was present at the battles of Chantilly, Fredericksburg, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Richmond and many others. Many Union veterans of the Civil War have acknowledged their indebtedness to Clara Barton for life. She was also revered by many Confederate soldiers because of her ministrations to them.

At the end of the war there were 80,000 men missing from the Union Armies and to her came appeals from families to locate their loved ones. She was summoned to the White House to discuss this problem with President Lincoln but before

plan could be put into action the President was assassinated. Hence she assumed the responsibility herself and organized this work of the 80,000 missing men, and her clerks were able to learn the fate of 20,000 of them. Then too, she visited battle sites and supervised the proper burial of 12,800 Union dead and 400 Confederates and had their graves properly marked. Both of these tasks were an enormous undertaking for one frail woman.

Her work in the Franco Prussian War is a remarkable chapter in her life and in recognition of her service in Europe she received the Iron Cross of Germany and the Red Cross of Geneva by the International Committee of Switzerland.

When she returned to this country in 1872, she persisted in spite of many rebuffs in trying to establish the Red Cross Organization in the United States. Finally, she evolved a plan for the extension of the work of the Red Cross to disasters in peace time.

And at last in March 1882, President Arthur signed the paper establishing the Association of the American Red Cross. Clara Barton was appointed its first president, a position she held for 23 years.

Miss Barton's work for humanity did not end with the Red Cross. For many years she had been impressed with the value of First Aid to the Injured and had tried without success to have it incorporated in the work of the Red Cross. In 1905, the National First Aid Association of America was organized and Miss Barton became its president. Now although this association still exists, the Red Cross has incorporated First Aid practice in its activities.

A wonderful life was that of Clara Barton. Her organizing genius, her political acumen, her ability to carry her ideals into action were outstanding. She is most fitting to be honored by admission to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans. Most sincerely,
Mrs. John C. DeWolfe

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